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AUGUST SAUER'S PRINCIPLES OF LITERARY HISTORIOGRAPHY

In 1912 and 1913 appeared the first two volumes of Josef Nadler's *Literaturgeschichte der deutschen Stämme und Landschaften*. The third and fourth volumes, while, according to reports, completed during the war, have as yet not reached us. This work marks the beginning of a new epoch in literary historiography, carrying out, as it does, successfully, the program outlined by Professor August Sauer in his memorable "Rektoratsrede," *Literaturgeschichte und Volkskunde*.¹ The histories of national literatures have hitherto been constructed upon plans very similar, if not identical, in principle. The orientation of the great standard works is either purely "literary" in a restricted sense, or more or less philosophical, ethical, esthetic, philological as the case may be. In the average compilations—and these form the vast majority of Histories of Literature—we find about the following method applied. Authors and "schools" are grouped under such headings as "major" or "minor" writers. Biographical data are apportioned according to rank. "Classical" works are discussed at some length, others mentioned "by title only," or "briefly characterized" by one or two epithets. There are periods, transition periods, and movements labelled Queen X, or King Y, or Classicism, Romanticism, Realism, Idealism, and the like. A formidable arsenal of ever-ready designations like epic, lyric, dramatic, poetic, beautiful; prose, fiction, type, genre, psychology, motif, creative genius, plastic power, description, influence, etc., is drawn upon for characterization, interpretation, analysis, criticism.

Thus the general outlines of our popular Histories of Literature show a harmonious uniformity, and it is at best the personal viewpoint of the individual author in details that relieves the monotony of the concert. Even Hippolyte Taine in his *English Literature* did not essentially overcome the convention altho his theory of milieu might have been the means of a radical reform; and so brilliant an achievement as Kuno Francke's *Social Forces in German Literature* remained on the

¹ Calve'sche Buchhandlung, Prague, 1907.

whole philosophical and esthetic so that its author found it expedient to change the original title to "History of German Literature as determined by social forces." It was left to the universality and audacity of Karl Lamprecht's genius to lift historiography out of the ruts of tradition. He, more than any other scholar of our generation, has been instrumental in demonstrating the value of a truly historical conception of human life in the broadest sense of the word "Kulturschichte." In the same spirit and, like Taine and Lamprecht, following the example of Herder, August Sauer laid down his principles of literary historiography. Too busy with his many activities as a teacher, investigator, editor, and biographer, to put his theory into practice on a large scale, he was fortunate enough to find in Josef Nadler a disciple who fulfilled his dream.

Nadler's method is genetic, experimental, and inductive; it is extensive in scope, intensive in its conclusions. He set himself the task of investigating the very sources of literary expression. It is not merely a part of the milieu but all of it that he presses into service. By "Stamm und Landschaft" he means political, social, economic history; mythology, folklore, religion, race, nation, tribe, family, heredity, climate, geography, topography, immigration and emigration—in short all the factors that shape and determine the soul of an individual and of a people.

As a result of this method we are not only enabled to correct many errors in judgment, but authors, works, and entire movements, in cases where established opinions were substantiated, appear rejuvenated in their new setting. Thus the portraits of medieval poets like Heinrich von Veldeke, Gottfried von Strassburg, Wolfram von Eschenbach, and Walther von der Vogelweide, so long obscured by the patina of convention, have been restored to their original lustre. "Faust," the prototype of Goethe's hero, is made to play his own vital part in the history and legend of his time, and so on.

It is not the purpose of these lines to give a review of Nadler's work, nor do we claim infallibility for its author. In fact there are very serious problems left open for discussion as we hope to point out in due time. For the present we wish to call the attention of our colleagues who work in non-Germanic fields to August Sauer's *Principles*. We believe that a knowl-

edge of that treatise, which in its original form has become practically inaccessible, will prove very stimulating. It is in this belief that we publish herewith an English version by Professor T. M. Campbell of its most important parts.

A few suggestions will be sufficient to show that an American scholar should and could do for American Literature what Professor Nadler on the basis of August Sauer's *Principles* has done for German Literature. It seems, to begin with, quite evident that Whitman's "terrible query: American National Literature—is there distinctively any such thing, or can there ever be?" will not be answered by the generalities of our present methods of investigation. "Americanization" is one of the catchwords of the day. But it is doubtful whether our official and officious Americanizers really know what Americanism is. Do they mean the Americanism of Wall Street or of W. J. Bryan; do they mean the Americanism of Emerson or of Billy Sunday? Do they mean the sterile puritanism of a certain New England coterie, or the progressive liberality of the Middle West?—and so forth. To understand the collective soul of America—if there be such a thing—we must first try to understand the individual souls of her constituent parts. In order to attain this end it will be necessary not only to make a complete inventory of present racial conditions and interrelations but also of their causes from the very beginning of our history. One of the most unscientific generalities is, e.g., contained in the word Anglo-Saxon. Is our civilization Anglo-Saxon? Is our literature Anglo-Saxon? What does "Anglo-Saxon" mean?: Scotch, plus Welsh, plus Irish, plus English, plus Saxon? If Hawthorne is an Anglo-Saxon, are Thoreau, Poe, Whitman, Traubel, Untermeyer, Anglo-Saxons, or are all of them Americans in the same sense as Hawthorne is an American? Why is it that Hawthorne, Emerson, and Thoreau, despite their personal friendship, are so fundamentally different from one another? What separated all three of them from Poe? Why is it that Walt Whitman, now celebrated as the greatest American poet, seemed so distasteful to the vast majority of his contemporaries? He once remarked that he was one-fourth a Teuton. Should the Teuton in him be responsible for his cosmopolitanism and for his love of German Metaphysics? Henry Bryan Binns attempted to write a life of Whitman on

the background of "Kulturgeschichte." He succeeded to a certain degree in differentiating the cultural atmospheres of East and South. But so inadequate were the preliminary studies he had to rely upon that romance took the place of science. For the same reason essays like Mabie's *American Ideals*; Macy's *The Spirit of American Literature*, Perry's *The American Mind* fall short of their authors' aims.

The fault lies—not to mention personal prejudices—with the lack of correlation between the science of literature on the one hand and the other historical sciences on the other. We have, for instance, a number of treatises on immigration. However, the problem of the effect of immigration upon American Literature has hardly been touched upon. The possible interrelations between non-English and English Literature in this country, even the very existence of several foreign-language literatures, have been completely ignored. As Professor Julius Goebel in his inspiring address *The New Problems of American Scholarship*² has pointed out there is here a tremendous field for investigation practically unbroken. How can a really scientific History of American Literature be written so long as the influence of a majority of non-Anglo-Saxon races with the innumerable diversities in their cultural character is ignored? We surely cannot build a house without foundations. In philology the study of dialectical variations is considered a natural part of the study of any national language. Archeology, mythology, ethnology, philosophy, art, etc., form the indispensable equipment of Classical as well as of Modern Philology. Only our historians of American Literature seem to be hidebound specialists.

As an extreme contrast to specialization there is to be noticed of late a premature tendency toward expansion beyond the limits of national literatures. We are indulging in "Comparative Literature" as a fad before we have mastered the principles of literary science. Many of us seem to be ignorant of so self-evident a fact that we cannot intelligently compare two or more unknown or half-known quantities. When we have traced the influence of a Spanish novelist on French fiction; when we have accumulated statistical data of performances of Ibsen's

² Cf. Publications of the Modern Language Assoc., 1915, pp. LXXIV ff.

plays in this or that country outside Norway, we call it a contribution to Comparative Literature. We also call Comparative Literature an express-train journey through the world's drama from Aeschylus to Bernard Shaw, or through the world's epic from the *Odyssey* to *Evangeline*. Gummere's *Origin of Poetry* has remained in its solitary confinement.

August Sauer's statement of principles should be a warning to us that we cannot hitch our literary wagons to the stars; that we must indeed be "gründlich"; that we must have a *genesis* in literary science, if we ever want a *revelation* of the spirit of national literature.

"The science of literature," says Professor Sauer, "is conditioned upon the philological examination of the sources of tradition, the application of lower and higher textual criticism, the comprehension of the language, the explanation of the words and sense of the documents. All the biographical and psychological conditions for the origin and completion of a literary work, as well as for its influence and reception, must be sought out. The authors and their works can be classified according to internal and external relationships into groups, parties, and schools. These historical relationships are comprehensible only in the light of the entire political, social, and cultural history of a people; and thus the history of literature, together with all its auxiliary sciences and its offshoots, with the history of printing and bookselling, of the theater and of the actor's art, of the newspaper and the periodical, forms, among other things, a subdivision of the history of civilization, and has its share in all the change and progress of the historical disciplines. In so far as literary productions can and must be considered as works of art, they are subject to consideration from an aesthetic point of view, and thus the science of literature is most intimately concerned in the creation of a new system of aesthetics and a new theory of poetry, which the present is engaged upon with passionate zeal. But the history of literature must also occupy itself with many literary productions that cannot stand the test of such an aesthetic criticism, and the days when whole hecatombs of literary works could be sacrificed to a narrow aesthetic doctrine have passed forever.

Every literary production is the outcome and expression of a definite philosophy of life and the world on the part of its

author. To that extent the history of literature is the history of philosophies of life, as presented in artistic guise. And it is not seldom that the ethical or intellectual content is so original or so profound that the works in question may well claim a special place in the history of religion or philosophy.

The subject-matter and motives that are made use of in the work may challenge special attention, whether because of their arrangement, their reciprocal influence, their selection and limitation, or their accretions and modifications. Of greater importance, however, is the method of elaboration and organization, the form, which first transforms the literary production into a work of art. For this reason the history of the evolution of form, style, rhythm, speechmelody, of metrics, will always have to be accorded a higher significance than the mere history of subject-matter and motives.

The different literary *genres* are subject to certain laws which reach out beyond the individual author from one work to another. Therefore the various kinds of literature and poetry (epic, lyric, dramatic, forensic, satirical, didactic, etc.) all have their peculiar evolutionary history, and these may either run parallel or cross and become entwined with one another.

If we disregard the origins of a national literature, which are difficult to comprehend and determine, the literature of a people in all the more highly civilized periods will always develop in a more or less intimate connection with that of another people, and often it can be interpreted only as a partial phenomenon in great cultural transferences, of the kind such as we are able to follow up through tens of centuries. Thus the literatures of single epochs, of national groups, and of continents fuse into a unit. Literatures of the past can exert a powerful influence upon those of succeeding ages, distant literatures can come in contact with one another, and thus the literature of one people takes its position in the totality of the world's literature, and the investigation of individual national literatures is replaced by a new science, which is still in its infancy, the science of general, or comparative, history of literature, and this in turn is compelled to develop new methods for the solution of its more comprehensive tasks. The comparative survey of many or all literatures leads to the recognition of certain regular, typical phenomena which recur under identical or similar conditions in

the evolution of different literatures, and the determination of such norms or laws, under the control of which the literary life of nations runs its course, would facilitate and encourage the scientific presentation of the national literatures—a stage of scientific development from which we still seem to be far removed.

In our existing presentations of the history of German Literature, in so far as they can lay claim to scientific recognition, there is a noticeable shifting of these partially one-sided points of view, according as in certain epochs or certain groups of authors the different aspects stand out with greater force and significance. We lack a great comprehensive work, reaching out in all directions, as well as those that would treat the whole history of German Literature exhaustively from one angle.

It seems to me that we have neglected especially one point of view, which should deserve consideration above all others, the relationship between German Literature and the German nationality as such, in other words the specifically national aspects of our literary history. It is true, the question has been proposed, and an answer to it attempted, as to how far the German national character is reflected in the most important monuments of our literature during the course of the centuries. But the attempt has failed, for the reason that this conception of the national character was much too general and too vague, yes in part it was even inferred from the very documents in which it was supposed to be recognized, so that one moved in a vicious circle. But while the character of such a widely branching nation as the German is indeed very difficult to comprehend with scientific exactness, it would seem much easier to define the character of the individual German peoples, districts, provinces and countries, which, in spite of wide divergencies in matters of details, are connected with one another by uniform traits. Because of unequal fusion with the original population, extending back into the most remote times, or with nomadic peoples thronging after them, or with supplanted or assimilated foreign nations, or with the romance, the slavic, and the less closely related neighbors; because of a better or a worse adaptation to the country and climate of the extensive territory; because of changing political destinies, religious differences, social classifications, professional cleavage, dynastic influences,

and many other things, the great German peoples, whose original grouping and disposition can still be amply observed, have been remoulded and reorganized in numerous ways, so that often in a narrow space formations of a different sort meet together. Thanks to our full and systematic development of the study of land and people, all these relationships and these differences are well known, and, with the aid, let us say, of Alfred Kirchhoff's brilliant treatise, *Die deutschen Landschaften und Stämme*, in Hans Meyer's widely circulated collection, *Das deutsche Volkstum*, one would only need to group the German poets according to their birth and descent in order to recognize with the utmost exactness their fundamental, their very close and intimate homogeneousness. For in the final analysis, no matter to what distant regions his later development may lead him, man is a product of the place where he was born, he is one of the stock that brought him forth, a member of those families from whose union he issued. Without desiring to touch upon all the difficult problems of descent, adaptation and inheritance, which many in this circle know and understand better than I do, and without anticipating further principles of explanation, one is still permitted to refer to those characteristics, which are altogether unmistakable and clearly evident, which everyone has in common with his race, and which unite people of the most divergent conditions and professions, and of all ages, if they spring from the same homeland. These racial traits form the oldest and most solid foundation, upon which are constructed all other influences and impressions, such as may be occasioned by training, education and experience. And if we knew these social traits, if we could comprehend them scientifically, they would also furnish an excellent criterion for a more or less natural classification of the writers and poets of a people.

Now German Literature is not lacking in works that have recognized the importance of considering provincial homogeneousness, and have made use of it for the classification of literature. In the first rank here Karl Goedeke must be named, the creator of a spiritualized bibliography, who, as a faithful disciple of Jacob Grimm, carried out the classification by provinces for considerable portions of his *Grundriss* and thus gave his work a firm popular basis. Likewise there is no lack of

independent works upon the literary history of districts, provinces, and localities. As a matter of course here those German territories have been preferred, in which, on account of temporary or permanent separation from the mother country, the spiritual and literary peculiarities are most plainly defined and are therefore easiest to recognize, such as Alsace, Switzerland, Austria (and here again the individual and very diverse elements of German-Austrian territory, as for example our German Bohemia). While formerly one was content with mere lists of authors and books, which exist for almost all the German provinces, in more recent times one proceeds to systematic presentations for the various parts of the German Empire, such as Swabia and Hessa already possess. Recently the very best results have been obtained in such presentations by the aid of cartographic illustrations, which are especially adapted for introducing this survey of literature by provinces into the schools. The literary wall-maps of Schleussinger and Karl Ludwig have been recently followed by a more comprehensive work, a German Literary Atlas by Siegfried Robert Nagel, which claims to found a new "science of literary geography," and which, notwithstanding important defects in details, brings out on the whole new and correct points of view. How instructive it is, for example, when in the Middle Ages one sees the entire north and east of the present German Empire lying there as a great white spot, and when one can observe how these regions were settled by literary pioneers after the Reformation. And a sharper separation of the important from the unimportant names would strengthen this impression still more. How instructive, when in the seventeenth century, Silesia, at that time still a part of Austria, is dotted with prominent names, and many other territories, as for example the regions of present-day Austria, appear almost without population. Further, how instructive it is to see that in our pre-classical period the strongest influences came from the periphery, from Hamburg, Switzerland, East Prussia; or to study the boundary line that encloses the native countries of the Storm and Stress authors, of the Göttinger group, of the older Romanticists—the fact that the last mentioned were all North Germans has been noticed with discernment and used with discrimination by Ricarda Huch, the historian of Romanticism.

How enlightening it is to trace out the gradual way in which, especially in the nineteenth century, almost all the provinces come into prominence, or revive, forming as it were a chorus; and how particular centers then attract the representatives of these districts, or a new movement, theory, or school gradually conquers all the provinces, even the most distant.

If we now supply in our imagination on these maps those finer provincial distinctions, which Nagel has neglected, as for example between Upper and Lower Silesia, between Tyrol and Vorarlberg, between Sleswig and Holstein, etc.; if we assume the racial boundaries considered, the dialectical variations recorded; if we could perhaps find a way of clearly separating the authors employing dialect from those employing High German, even though they come from the same province; a means of dividing sharply the authors of purely local or provincial importance from those of more general influence; if we should consider such suggestions as Nagel, acting on my hints, adduces in part in his preface, namely that we trace out upon separate maps such things as the distribution of certain literary tendencies, for example, the schools of the Meister singers, the school-drama, the Kantian philosophy, Romanticism; or as the movements of the English, French, and Dutch Comedians; or as the founding of permanent theaters, of the moral weeklies, of the first newspapers in the modern sense, etc. etc.—then the literary atlas could be developed into just as important an aid as the long since recognized *Bilderatlas zur deutschen Literaturgeschichte* by Könnecke.

There is one matter that all presentations of this sort must consider more carefully than has been done hitherto. The birthplace alone does not determine racial membership. We must always enquire, how long the families, from which the poet springs, have been settled in the respective provinces, and whence they came—whether, in short, the poet is indigenous in the province in question or not. . . . If German historians to-day, and properly so, recognize it as their duty to give an account of the destinies of German emigrants in distant lands, then the historians of provincial literature may not pass by the poets who have been active elsewhere than in their native provinces.

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Against the grouping of German poets according to provinces such as I am proposing, three objections may be raised, and these must be answered.

The strong provincial coloring in the case of the lesser poets is conceded. But the higher a poet stands, so much the more do we think we observe him outgrowing the nourishing soil of his home, and in the case of the genius this relationship has often been denied or else declared to be unimportant. Even in Goedeke's *Grundriss*, while the poets of second and third rank are arranged according to provinces and peoples, the chief representatives of our national literature are on the other hand grouped in conformity with different principles. We must, however, most decidedly put an end to this differentiation. It is true that those sociological theories which "pulverized" the hero and dissolved the genius into his elements may now be regarded as exploded. The great man has once more taken his place as leader at the head of the masses, who without him would never have attained the same results as under guidance. The great advances and the important deeds in the realm of poetry especially have always proceeded from individuals and always will do so. Even the so-called folksong goes back to the creative act of an individual, whether he be a cultured poet or an artless one, and only when it comes to the appropriation of such a song, do the people, and even then the individual singers among the people, undertake certain changes in the finished work, in order to make the poem clearer and to adapt it better for their use. The masses as such produce no poetry. And notwithstanding all this, even the greatest poetic genius is anchored by a thousand ties to his native soil, and therefore he has numerous racial characteristics in common with the others of his ethnic group, which alone give him the stamp of a national poet.

What is conceded in the case of the Swiss, Gottfried Keller, of the Silesian, Eichendorff, of the Tyrolese, Pichler, of the Mecklenburger, Reuter, of Theodor Storm of Sleswig, and many others, namely that they are the truest representatives of their people, that in the best and highest creations of their muse they are rooted in their native soil, and are not to be conceived of apart from this home atmosphere and home flavor —this same thing must likewise be conceded without demur for

Kleist, the Prussian, for Hebbel, the Frisian, for Grillparzer, the Mid-Austrian, and for Schiller, the Swabian. Indeed, Weltrich's biography of Schiller, for example, is planned entirely with reference to this provincial and ethnic connection of the poet with his home (in the narrow sense of that word) and Schiller's nature may be characterized as Swabian through and through. And is it an accident that the most virile of our German authors, that Lessing and Fichte are the most closely related fellow-countrymen, both being from Upper Lusatia. Thus there remains at last only the greatest of all, whose gigantic proportions seem to burst the ties of all sectional narrowness or provincial constraint. To be sure in Goethe's case, especially in the times of his absorption in ancient models and classical style, it is more difficult than in any other case to point out with certainty and in detail the elements that are racially German, not to mention the traits of the Frankish people. But in his case likewise the starting-point and the goal are known and admitted. The letters of his mother form a treasure of popular feeling and thought, which is not yet completely drained. In the veins of the man who descended from this woman there flowed such a fountain of popular robustness and raciness, as could never quite run dry. He who, like the young Goethe, listened to the words that fell from the servants' lips and preserved them with almost stenographic exactness; he who, like Goethe, showed sympathy with the lower classes and was glad to have to do with vagabonds and tramps, now and then even bringing some such person to his father's house; he who was so at home in the poetry of our most popular century, as was the author of *Götz* and *Faust*; he who was so familiar with German nick-names and terms of abuse, as the remodeler of the popular farce *Hanswursts Hochzeit*—of such a man it cannot be said that he stands in no relation to German folklore, even if *Hermann und Dorothea* does fail us as a means for answering folklore questionnaires. For every other literary influence we can give the name, but those nameless sources of popular influence we do not know. Further, the clear insight with which he studied the life of the people in Italy cannot possibly furnish any proof that the life of the people at home was a matter of indifference to him. If Goethe, anticipating the founding of the science of folklore, laid down, before his intended

third trip to Italy, a detailed outline for a formal folklore of Italy, in which he intended to record and classify the people's entire life, religion and superstition, games and dances, gestures and dress, proverbs and idiotisms, then it is permissible to conclude that his senses must have been alert likewise for all these things in his own country. Karl Reuschel has successfully examined Goethe's works with this thought in mind. The many jests, anecdotes, comic traits etc., that are set down in Goethe's *Diary* prove the same thing. When the aged Goethe takes such interest in the life and doings of the people in Egerland, and there advances and encourages the recording of popular traditions, then this is important evidence to show that his own mind was racially German, a fact that is apparent likewise in many a forceful expression in his conversations and in many a robust saying in the *Zahme Xenien* of his old age. In general in the aged Goethe, after all that the years of his middle life had done to obscure it and render it indistinct, the racial German disposition breaks through again energetically, as for example in the *Invektiven* and the *Sprüche*. But even in that intervening period we are often surprised by connections with popular German art, as, for example, in the outline of a funeral celebration for Schiller in dramatic form, the conversation he planned between the girl and the figure of death (conceived according to ancient models); or again the use of the popular contrast of swan and goose in the *Helena* drama, of antique design. Thus Goethe, far from being an exception to the rule, is much rather the highest and finest proof of the fact that the inborn German traits shine through even the heaviest veil of the most comprehensive cosmopolitan culture and cannot be conquered by all the influences of foreign literatures.

A second, if less forceful objection, would be that, while for certain past times this close relationship between literature and race may be admitted, its claims for the literature of the present should be modified decidedly, and for the future entirely denied. There are, to be sure, times and tendencies—and we find this in German literature also—in which the relationship with what is genuinely racial, original and of the soil, is much less marked than at other times; when hyperculture, aestheticism, speculation, affectation, frivolity and virtuosity grow over and smother out that which is simple, primitive and healthy. So far, how-

ever, the repressed popular elements have always been able to struggle to light through the worst of thickets and weeds. The contrast, often exaggerated, between urban and rural or provincial poetry cannot change that. For the large cities draw their vitality likewise from the popular elements of the individual provinces and peoples, and produce at most a new—but not less truly racial character, which then welds into a group the inhabitants of the particular city, and separates them in turn sharply from other groups of urban poets.

The third objection that could be made to my conception is this: Where can we find a sure standard for the measurement of popular character? Whereby do we recognize the connection of the poet, who is known to us, and of his works with the inherited racial character? What means of a scientific nature are at our command for knowing the people, the nameless masses, in their innermost being?

During the course of the last decades, along with the more widely extended sciences of ethnography and ethnology, there has been formed a new national science of folklore, more exactly the science of ethnic folklore, which furnishes us these means of recognizing the racial character and comparing the particular individuality of the poet with it. Here is not the place to trace out the history of this remarkable discipline. It was really already created by the Brothers Grimm, and then, while zealously cultivated in foreign nations, in Germany itself it sank more or less into neglect, until it was rediscovered among us, rescued from the hands of the dilettante, and established anew by Weinhold, and this time on a firmer and securer basis. I should like to mention just one man, who in the eighties of the nineteenth century, in an important essay, demanded and prepared the way for the revival of the science of folklore, and to whose personal influence I am probably indebted for the fact that I have never quite relinquished this science, and that since that time the ethnical basis has always seemed to me to be the test of every genuinely national literature. This was Gustav Meyer's famous essay *Folklore*, in 1885.

Folklore we call the science, which has for its task, to discover and portray the physical appearance, the mode of life, customs and laws, language, poetry and religion of a people, and to pursue all these phenomena in their historical evolution,

as well as in their connections with related and foreign peoples. Whatever belongs peculiarly to the lower, especially the rural, classes of the population, classes kept as free as possible from the elements of international education and civilization, comes within the reach of folklore: the peculiar type-formation of head and body, the dialect, vocabulary and names, house and home, with all the household goods; the dress, means of livelihood, and food; the primitive products of popular art and industry, the customs and usages that are connected with annual, or family celebrations, with the daily life of the peasant and the shepherd; the popular ideas, superstitions, witchcraft, the art of healing, the songs with their melodies, the games and dramatic performances, sayings and proverbs, riddles and jests. Folklore, however, not only undertakes investigations and collections, to be arranged according to races and provinces, it also strives to make use of these popular traditions for a character-science of the individual peoples and provinces, and finally for a characterization of the national spirit. As its ultimate and highest task, as the end and aim of folklore must be considered the discovery of a scientific formulation of the concept race-spirit (*Volksseele*). If this still youthful science of folklore succeeds in reaching this lofty goal, if it can furnish us characteristics that are firmly established and carefully considered, from a scientific point of view, of the nature of the German people, arranged according to provinces and ethnic groups, then the history of literature has a firm basis for a verdict as to whether the individual belongs to this racial type, for our estimate of the ethnic, provincial, popular strain in the nature of the individual poet, and nothing further hinders the attempt to survey the history of German Literature itself according to provinces and peoples. The attempts hitherto made in provincial or ethnic folklore, as well as the comprehensive works on German folklore, have, and in part confessedly so, fallen far short of this high aim. Neither the folklore of Saxony, edited by Wuttke, nor the folklore of Brunswick by Andree, nor that of Baden by Elard Hugo Meyer, however admirably these works have succeeded in some respects, comes to the point where the material, so carefully collected and excellently arranged, could be finally summarized into such a character-science of the region described. These works resign the attempt to penetrate all the

observed phenomena to the ultimate factors of their ethical nature or their spiritual evolution. Yes, the last named scholar expressly says in the preface to his *Deutsche Volkskunde*, a work in all other respect fundamental: "A final chapter, summarizing those results that are especially important for the total character and the ethnic differences of our people, did not yet seem to me feasible."

Likewise the second limitation in the present methods of folklore is expressly emphasized in E. H. Meyer's preface, namely that hitherto it has mainly considered the life of the peasant, but to a smaller extent that of the workman, the soldier, and the townsman. But the spiritual physiognomy of these classes can just as well be investigated by the use of the same method; and in addition to the rural population, which is the most important class for folklore, all the classes must in time be considered.

If the historians of literature will, in this sense, make higher demands of folklore, then it cannot be doubted in the least that this growing science will become ever broader and more profound. I am satisfied with having pointed out that to the numerous disciplines which have experienced or will experience a regeneration from the cultivation of folklore, the history of literature must belong.

Summing up my arguments, I propose the following theses:

1. Family history, also that of the *bourgeois* families, a little cultivated branch of genealogy (which latter has been restored to honor again by Lorenz), must in increased measure be used for research in biographical literary history, and the preparation of reliable family-trees for all the more important poets should be attempted.

2. Especial attention must be given to provincial and local literary history. To the general literary history of Germany must be added ethnical or sectional literary histories of provinces, much in the same way as within the general political history of modern times, as founded by Heeren and Ukert, and carried on by Lamprecht, now a particular department of German provincial histories has been established.

3. To this end literary history must make much greater use than hitherto of the results of researches in folklore, and the latter must go beyond collecting and describing to the ethnical and provincial character-science of the German nation.

4. The attempt must be made to prepare an outline of the history of German literature by starting from the popular foundations, according to ethnical and provincial grouping; by representing the provinces and peoples more than hitherto in their peculiar character and their reciprocal influences; and by determining in the case of every poet, every group of poets, and every work how firmly they are rooted in the German racial character, or how far they are perhaps removed from it. The history of literature, as written from above, would be supplemented by a literary-historical survey from beneath, from the standpoint of the ethnical elements, with especial consideration of dialectical poetry.

To what extent these principles might perhaps also find corresponding application to the thorough investigation of foreign literatures, or to the history of music and art, is a question that must be left for the consideration of those who represent these neighboring sciences."

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